

- 2) Our thoughts – all other areas of our life are affected by our thoughts. We are to have and display the mind of Christ.
- 3) Our attitudes – Attitudes can be thought of as prolonged thoughts. They affect us and those around us. All our attitudes should reflect the attitudes of Jesus.
- 4) Our words – what we say matters. They are affected by our motives, thoughts and attitudes. All our words should build people up, not tear them down.
- 5) Our actions – actions do not happen in a vacuum. They are also affected by our motives, our thoughts and our attitudes. Our actions should reflect Jesus' actions.

Now come back to John 17:17 & 19. Read them over a few times, consider how this request relates to your loved ones and pray from them that they would live a more distinct life by being more like Jesus in these five areas.

Unite the Saints

Jesus' final request in this prayer is specifically for saints who are alive today. He prays for "those who believe in me (Jesus) through their (the apostles') word." This prayer has a specific purpose: that the world would believe 1) that He was sent by the Father and 2) that they are loved by the Father. Unity has a purpose: evangelism.

Each time Jesus mentions His desire for a united church, (in vv. 11, 21, 22, & 23) He refers to a standard of unity. That standard is the relationship He has with His Father. That is the standard of unity He has for His Church today.

So, based upon these truths, we can pray that...

- 1) We would more fully understand the relationship between the Father and the Son and our unity with the Father and the Son.
- 2) We would not judge other believers by what God has called us to do.
- 3) We would understand His Church (and each member of His Church) more the way He sees it. We really do need one another.
- 4) We would recognize the grace God gives to others may be different than the grace He gives to us and bless the differences.
- 5) We would love, respect, share mutual honor, and high regard for one another based upon the relationship between the Father and the Son.
- 6) That those who don't yet know Jesus would see the unity of His Church and know the authenticity of Jesus and the availability of the Father's love.

Don't be limited by the suggestions offered in this prayer guide. Listen to the Lord, who first prayed these requests. He will expand and deepen them far beyond anything you have read in this guide. Let this be a starting line, not a finish line. Also, don't pray it just once and be done with it. You will not exhaust this pattern of Jesus. Pray it over and over. It will get deeper and deeper as you do.

Let Jesus' Prayer Guide Your Prayer for Your Loved Ones

[You are welcome to make copies of this guide (without alteration) and distribute it as you see fit. It is adapted from the (forthcoming) book **Elevating Our Prayers** by Dennis Fuqua – available at www.lppress.net.]

The longest recorded prayer of Jesus is John 17. This chapter is a great gift to followers of Christ because it allows us to "listen in" to this prayer, which Jesus prayed at a most critical time in His life: the night before He was crucified.

Jesus was somewhere between the "upper room" and the garden of Gethsemane. He was very serious when He prayed it. This is no hap-hazard prayer or shallow prayer He prayed because He couldn't think of anything else to pray. And Jesus allowed His disciples to hear Him pour out His heart to His Father. Years later, the Holy Spirit helped the apostle John write out what He heard.

Unless we have the perspective that we know more about how to pray than Jesus did, we will do well to learn from this prayer of Jesus and incorporate some of His prayer into our prayers. As we pattern our prayers around these requests of Jesus, we not only will be praying better, but also learning from Him as well.

You may follow this pattern as an individual or in a group setting. If used in a group setting, it would be wise for the leader to be familiar with this chapter and this guide. You may want to divide your group time into four (generally) equal time frames, for example 4 15 or 20 minute segments.

There are four requests Jesus prayed in John 17. They are so important that He prayed each one at least twice. Here they are in chart form.

The requests	The verses
Glorify Your Son	1 & 5
Protect (keep) the Saints	11 & 15
Sanctify the Saints	17 & 19
Unite the Saints	11, 21, 22, & 23

Let's look at and pray from each one. Begin by reading these verses and praying from them. Then read and follow the thoughts and suggestions below, section by section.

Glorify Your Son

This is a great "all around" request! When in doubt, pray that Jesus would be glorified by whatever situation you are in or praying about.

The Old Testament word translated "glory" literally means "weighty." Weighty things leave an impression. I suggest a very accurate and appropriate understanding of the word "glory" is "impressive." In Psalms 19:1, when David looked up at the stars, he was impressed with their grandeur and the greatness of the One who made them. When we are impressed with something, we are giving it glory. We bring glory to God when others are more impressed with Him because of our lives.

There are several specific ways Scripture states we can bring glory to God. Read the following verses and note what it says about glorifying God. Then pray prayers from each verse toward that end, for yourself and/or for others you love.

John 17:4 *I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do.*

Matthew 5:16 *In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.*

1 Peter 2:12 *Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.*

John 15:8 *This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.*

Now come back to John 17:1 & 5. Read them over a few times, consider how this request relates to your concerns and pray from them that the Son would be glorified in the situations and circumstances you care about and in the lives of your loved ones.

Protect the Saints

The evil one wants to do great damage to people. He is thoroughly evil. He is stronger than us and craftier than us. But he is not all-powerful nor is he present everywhere. This is why Jesus and other Biblical authors tells us to pray for spiritual protection. We should be very aware of him, but never afraid of him.

There are four specific areas where people need protection from the evil one: our minds, our bodies, our spiritual lives, and our social lives. This comes from the way Luke describes how Jesus grew in Luke 2:52. *And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.*

Consider these four areas and pray for your family, friends, and other believers using this as a pattern.

Wisdom	Their mental condition – thought life, walking in truth, growing in wisdom, knowledge, understanding.
Stature	Their physical condition – physical safety, health, diet, safety from drugs, alcohol and other detrimental influences.
Favor with God	Their spiritual condition – growing relationship with God, grasping His love and grace, developing spiritual disciplines,
Favor with people	Their social condition – good relationships with peers, those both younger and older, good influences and influencing.

Jesus prayed we would be protected "by the power of Your name." Proverbs 18:10 says, "The name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous run into it and are safe." What does it mean to "run into" the name of Jesus? It means that His name (i.e. His character, His nature) is sufficient for every situation we face. It means we depend upon Him for everything, that we live within the bounds of His nature and character. We live for His reputation, not ours. When we live there, He graciously provides protection for us.

Now come back to John 17:11 & 15. Read them over a few times, consider how this request relates to your loved ones and pray from them that, the people you care about would be protected from the evil one by the power of His name.

Sanctify the Saints

The Father's desire for us is not only that we would bring glory to Jesus and that we would be protected from the evil one, it is also that we would be sanctified. Verses 17 and 19 states this as Jesus' 3rd request.

Sanctified simply means to be holy. I want to offer you another word: distinction. We sometimes think of holiness as a vertical concept. That is, we think of it in terms of getting "better and better," of reaching higher degrees of holiness. But I think we are more accurate to think of holiness as a horizontal concept. That is, as being distinct from what we used to be and distinct from those who make no claim to know Christ as their Lord.

In verse 17 Jesus connected holiness to His Word. We grow in holiness as our lives are conformed to His Word: both the written Word and the Living Word. Here are five key areas where we are to be conformed to Jesus, but the power of His Spirit, according to His Word.

1) Our motives – everything starts here. Our motives are always to be that of love.